(c) whether the price of iodised salt is ten times more than the common salt and the poor are not able to afford it; and

(d) whether the incidence of iodine-deficiency disease like goitre etc. for which iodised salt is recommended, is minimal in States like Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) The Government has prohibited the sale of common salt only for direct human consumption.

(b) Representations have been received in connection with the implementation of the above notification.

(c) No, Sir. The average daily requirement of salt per person is about 10 grams only. The price of loose common salt is in the range of Rs. 2 to 4 per kilogram while one kilogram packet of iodised salt costs around Rs. 6/- per kilo depending on the brand.

(d) No, Sir. Out of 17 districts surveyed in Gujarat, 9 districts are endemic as the prevalence of Giotre/Iodine Dificiency Disorders in these districts is more than 10 percent.

Petrochemicals Plants in Punjab

*353. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision to put up a petro-chemical plant in Punjab has taken sometime back;

(b) what is the present status of the Project?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) and (b) The Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation Limited (PSIDC), a State Government Undertaking of the Government of Punjab had submitted an application on March 2, 1994 to the Ministry of Industry for issue of a licence for the setting up of a Naphtha Cracker Project in the State of Punjab. This was supported by the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals and a Letter of Intent (LOI) No. LI; 261 (1994) dated May 4, 1994 valid for three years was issued to PSIDC by the Ministry of Industry. On the application of Letter of Intent holder the LOI was subsequently extended for a further period of six months w.e.f. 4.5.1997. According to the information received from PSIDC, they have appointed M/s. Engineers India Ltd. as consultants for preparation of a Techno-Economic Feasibility Report including the selection of site and they (PSIDC) are making efforts to identify co-promoter for setting up the petrochemical plant in the joint/assisted sector.

Shatabdi Express trains run by the Indian Railways

*354. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of Shatabdi Express trains presently being run by the Indian Railways;

(b) whether several Shatabdi Express trains are incurring losses;

(c) if so, the details thereof and since when these are incurring losses;

(d) whether none of these trains were introduced based on a traffic survey to assess the potential for the growth of traffic; and

(e) what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) The details of the 14 paris of Shatabdi Express trains presently running on the Indian Railways are as under:

S.No.	Train No.	
1.	2001/2002 New Shatabdi Express	Delhi-Bhopal
2.	2003/2004 New Shatabdi Express	Delhi-Lucknow

S.No.	Train No.
3	2005/2006 New Delhi-Kalka Shatabdi Express
4.	2007/2008 Chennai-Mysore Shatabdi Express
5.	2009/2010 Mumbai Central-Ahmedabad Shatabdi Express
6.	2011/2012 New Delhi-Chandigarh Shatabdi Express
7.	2013/2014 New Delhi-Amritsar Shatabdi Express
8.	2015/2016 New Delhi-Ajmer Shatabdi Express
9.	2017/2018 New Delhi-Dehradun Shatabdi Express
10.	2019/2020 Howrah-Bokaro Steel City Shatabdi Express
11.	2021/2022 Howrah-Rourkela Shatabdi Express
12.	2023/2024 Chennai-Coimbatore Shatabdi Express
13.	2027/2028 Mumbai CST-Pune Shatabdi Express
14.	2029/2030 New Delhi-Amritsar Shatabdi Express

(b) The Train-wise cost analysis is not done on the Railways.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) The criteria for introduction of trains on the Indian Railways is not based only on the traffic survey but also on popular demand and anticipated growth of traffic. The occupancy figure of most of these trains is very satisfactory. However, to improve the occupancy of some of the trains which are not being fully patronised, various steps are being taken, e.g., conversion of Shatabdi Express train into a superfast intercity train.

Frequency of trains between Travandrum and Ernakulam

*355. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the frequency of trains is very less between Trivandrum and Ernakulam via Alleppey; and

(b) if so, whether Government will introduce more trains on this route?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Sir, four pairs of trains are currently running between Ernakulam and Trivandrum via Alleppey. Introduction of additional trains in this sector has been examined but not found feasible due to operational constraints of line capacity and non availability of terminal/maintenance facilities at both Ernakulam and Trivandrum stations.

Amount Spent on Medicines

*356. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state the per capita amount spent by the Central Government on medicines in the country in Seventh and Eighth Five Year Plans, State-wise, separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): The per capita amount spent on medicines in respect of the major Centrally Sponsored disease control programmes viz., Malaria, TB and Leprosy during the Seventh and Eighth Five Year Plan periods, State-wise, is given in the Statement being laid on the Table of the House (Annexure-I) [*See* Appendix 184, Annexure No. 73] In calculating the per capita expenditure, the total assistance given in the form of medicines has been divided by the population of the State as per 1991 Census figures.

The per capita expenditure on drugs, vaccines etc. provided under the Family